REMARKS

As an initial matter, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review of the application, and for speaking with Applicant's Attorney on June 28, 2006.

The claims have been amended to further define the present invention over the cited prior art. Further, a detailed discussion of support in the specification for the claim language is found below.

The Applicant acknowledges the constructive election by original presentation of Claims 38-51 and has, accordingly, cancelled Claims 52-57, pursuant to the restriction requirement issued by the Examiner.

I. THE CLAIMED INVENTION

The invention, as recited, for example, in amended independent Claim 38, is directed to a supply chain management system. The supply chain management system of the present invention authorizes an autonomic requisition cycle, and includes a predictive diagnostic condition management system carried by a vehicle. The predictive diagnostic condition management system transmits a failure code using a radio frequency (RF) transmitter.

The supply chain management system also includes an off-board predictive diagnostic condition management system that is spaced-apart from the predictive diagnostic condition management system. The off-board predictive diagnostic condition management system receives the failure code using a radio frequency receiver and generates an off-board predictive

diagnostic condition management failure code responsive to the received failure code.

The supply chain management system further includes a software based distributed secure information system in data communication with the off-board predictive diagnostic condition management system via a data bus to receive the failure code. The distributed secure information system comprises a plurality of software modules in communication with one another via data busses to authorize delivery of a vehicle asset to a location of the vehicle from an issuing location. The distributed secure information system also authorizes delivery of the vehicle asset from the location of the vehicle to a repair source, and replenishes the vehicle asset to the issuing location.

The failure code is transmitted from the predictive diagnostic condition management system of the vehicle to the off board predictive diagnostic condition management system using an RF signal. The failure code is also carried by the data bus between the off-board predictive diagnostic condition management system and the distributed secure information system, and between the software modules of the distributed secure information system.

II. THE CLAIMS ARE FULLY SUPPORTED BY THE SPECIFIATION

The Examiner has rejected remaining Claims 38-51 under 35 U.S.C. §112 as failing to comply with the written description requirement. More specifically, the Examiner contended that the claims contained subject matter that was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one

skilled in the art that the inventor, at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. The Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner and submits that the claim language is fully supported by the specification, as will be discussed in greater detail below.

Amended independent Claim 38 calls for a supply chain management system that authorizes an autonomic requisition cycle. The abstract specifically supports a supply chain management system that autonomously authorizes a complete requisition cycle of supply chain assets. Support is also provided for a supply chain management system that authorizes an autonomic requisition cycle in paragraph 16 of the specification.

As further recited in independent Claim 38, the supply chain management system of the present invention includes a predictive diagnostic condition management system carried by a vehicle to transmit a failure code using a radio frequency transmitter. Support for the predictive diagnostic condition management system is found in paragraph 40 of the specification. Support for transmission of a failure code using a radio frequency transmitter is also found in paragraph 40 of the specification.

More particularly, paragraph 40 notes that the autonomic mode of the supply chain management system "is activated by a vehicle downloading via RF transmission while returning to a site having a ground based off-board predictive diagnostic condition management system". Paragraph 40 of the specification goes on to detail "inputting a copy of the vehicle's predictive diagnostic condition management data into

the off-board predictive diagnostic condition management system at which time a complete autonomic supply chain management requisition cycle is performed."

Referring additionally to paragraph 49, the "failure code" is discussed in greater detail. More specifically, paragraph 49 notes that "as a vehicle returns from a mission, if a monitored failure has occurred, it may perform an RF transmission of preventative/diagnostic failure data to the off-board predictive diagnostic condition management system." Paragraph 49 goes on to note that the RF transmission includes a failure code.

The supply chain management system also includes an off-board predictive diagnostic condition management system that is spaced apart from the predictive diagnostic condition management system. The off-board predictive diagnostic condition management system receives the failure code using a radio frequency receiver, and generates an off-board predictive diagnostic condition management failure code responsive to the received failure code.

The off-board predictive diagnostic condition management system is discussed in detail in paragraphs 40 and 49. More specifically, paragraph 40 notes that the predictive diagnostic condition management system downloads data via RF transmission to the off-board predictive diagnostic condition management system while returning to a site. Paragraph 49 further discloses that the vehicle performs an RF transmission of failure data to the off-board predictive diagnostic condition management system. Paragraph 50 of the specification also

describes the off-board predictive diagnostic condition management failure code in greater detail.

The supply chain management system still further comprises a software-based distributed secure information system in data communication with the off-board predictive diagnostic condition management system via a data bus. The software-based distributed secure information system receives the off-board predictive diagnostic condition management failure code and includes a plurality of software modules in communication with one another via data buses. The software modules may authorize delivery of vehicle assets to locations of the vehicle from an issuing location, authorize delivery of the vehicle component from the location of the vehicle to a repair source, and replenish the vehicle asset to the issuing location.

As perhaps best illustrated in Figure 1, the off-board predictive diagnostic condition management system is in data communication via a data bus (open arrow represents data bus symbol, as understood by those skilled in the art). Paragraph 16 specifically discloses that the supply chain management software modules are embedded within the distributed secure information system.

The failure code is transmitted from the predictive diagnostic condition management system of the vehicle to the off-board predictive diagnostic condition management system using an RF signal. Further, the failure code is carried by the data bus between the off-board predictive diagnostic condition management system and the distributed secure information system, and also between the software modules of the distributed secure

information system. As noted above, the data buses are thoroughly illustrated within Figure 1. The RF signal used to transmit the failure code from the predictive diagnostic condition management system of the vehicle to the off-board predictive diagnostic condition management system is thoroughly discussed in paragraphs 40 and 49.

Dependent Claim 39 recites that the supply chain management system autonomically authorizes delivery of a vehicle asset responsive to the off-board predictive diagnostic condition management failure code. Again, detailed description of receipt of the failure code which, in turn, triggers the autonomic supply chain management system and, further, results in delivery of a vehicle asset, is provided in paragraphs 40 and 49, as well as in Figure 1, blocks 2 and 3. Paragraph 17 of the specification notes that the autonomic functions of the supply chain management system accelerates delivery and retrograde of assets. Paragraph 27 notes that a vehicle's priority to receive assets may be based on a failure code.

Dependent Claim 40 recites that the off-board predictive diagnostic condition management failure code includes a vehicle number, an issue failure priority code, a part number, a commercial and government entity code, a serial number, and a location of the component on the vehicle. Support for these recitations is readily found in paragraph 29 of the specification.

Dependent Claim 41 provides that one of the plurality of software modules is a total asset visibility module for determining availability of the vehicle asset at a local site,

and for searching other sites if the vehicle asset is not available at the local site. Figure 1 clearly sets forth that one of the software modules is a total asset visibility module.

Referring now additionally to the end of paragraph 18, it is noted that the total asset visibility database locates part availability whether it is in military storage, shipped direct from a supplier, or a lateral/alternate source. Paragraph 44 describes the total asset visibility module with great specificity. More specifically, paragraph 44 provides that the total asset visibility module provides location, movement, quantity and asset condition status. Paragraph 44 further thoroughly describes the functions of the total asset visibility module.

As recited in dependent Claim 42, the total asset visibility module provides real time global location, quantity and status of vehicle assets in place and in transit. Support for the total asset visibility module is found in paragraph 52. More particularly, paragraph 53 notes that a key requirement for autonomic operation is knowing the global location, quantity and status in real time of a system's assets using the total asset visibility module. Paragraph 53 goes on to note that the total asset visibility module includes in-place total asset visibility and in-transit total asset visibility.

Dependent Claim 43 recites that the supply chain management system further comprises a configuration management and a logistics support analysis record. Both the configuration management and the logistics support analysis record are in data communication with the total asset visibility module to compare

the off-board predictive diagnostic condition management failure code to the vehicle asset at the issuing location.

The configuration management and logistics support analysis record are thoroughly described in paragraphs 29 and 30 of the specification. More specifically, paragraphs 29 and 30 discuss comparing information located on the condition management to the logistics support analysis record. The information that is compared may be found in the off-board predictive diagnostic condition management failure code.

Referring now more specifically to dependent Claim 44, the requisition cycle may be semi-autonomically initiated by a user to authorize delivery of the vehicle asset to the vehicle, and to determine availability of the vehicle asset. Paragraph 19 of the specification notes that the requisition cycle may be operated in the semi-autonomic mode when initiated by a user. Paragraph 17 of the specification notes that a visual inspection or troubleshooting by a user may result in a determination that an asset is needed when the system is operating in the semi-autonomic mode. Further, the semi-autonomic mode allows the user to check availability of an asset upon receipt of a predictive failure code without ordering the asset. Paragraph 17 goes on to note that the user may perform a search or input a requisition.

Dependent Claim 45 recites that one of the plurality of software modules is a retrograde module in data communication with the logistics support analysis record. The retrograde module includes a source, maintainability, and recoverability code for determining if the vehicle asset is repairable, and to determine a location of the repair source. As illustrated in

Figure 1, the retrograde module is positioned in data communication with the logistics support analysis record. Paragraph 36 notes that a repair source will be determined and located if the source, maintainability, and recoverability code of the retrograde module indicates that the asset is repairable.

Dependent Claim 46 notes that one of the modules is a routing module to determine routing of the vehicle asset. The routing module is illustrated in Figure 1 as one of the software modules of the system. Referring to paragraph 32 of the specification, it is noted that the routing module may be triggered to determine the most affordable routing to ensure delivery of the vehicle asset.

Dependent Claim 47 notes that the routing module calculates an asset delivery schedule of the vehicle asset based on a time definite delivery standard and/or material delivery performance effectiveness. Referring to paragraph 16 of the specification, it is noted that requisition cycle transactions are accomplished by autonomic selection of the most affordable transportation source that ensures delivery of the asset in accordance with a contractually specified variable time definite delivery standard in accordance with global region, weight and an issue failure priority code and in compliance with a fixed material delivery performance effectiveness.

Dependent Claim 48 provides that one of the plurality of software modules is a records module for providing historical data and material delivery performance effectiveness data. The records and tools module is disclosed in paragraph 38 of the specification. More particularly, paragraph 38 notes that the

records module provides required historical data. Paragraph 38 goes on to note that a key function of the records module is its ability to display material delivery performance effectiveness information to ensure contract requirements are met.

Dependent Claim 49 provides that one of the plurality of software modules is a surge priority ranking module for determining priority of delivery of the vehicle asset from the issuing location to the location of the vehicle. Figure 1 illustrates that one of the software modules of the distributed secure information system is the surge priority ranking module. Paragraph 19 notes that the surge priority ranking module is based on relative importance of user mission objectives to ensure an asset is delivered to the user with the highest priority ranking. Paragraph 20 goes on to note that the surge priority ranking module provides required ranking criteria for delivery of assets.

Dependent Claim 50 notes that the supply chain management system further comprises at least one alert alarm that is activated when a pre-determined condition exists. The pre-determined condition may be inability to locate the vehicle asset or inability to deliver the vehicle asset within a time definite delivery standard. Paragraph 19 of the specification notes that the alert function may be used if an asset cannot be delivered within the time definite delivery standard. Further, paragraph 33 notes that an alert alarm may be activated if a spare (vehicle asset) is not found. An alarm that may be activated at the help desk is also illustrated in Figure 1.

Dependent Claim 51 provides that the vehicle asset may include a bar code affixed thereto or a radio frequency identification tag for identification. Paragraph 32 of the specification notes that a vehicle asset may be bar code scanned into the condition management system to maintain total asset visibility. Further, and as described in detail in paragraph 44, bar coded decals and intelligent tags may be included to maintain total asset visibility.

III. THE CLAIMS, AS AMENDED, ARE PATENTABLE OVER U.S. PATENT NO. 6,826,607 TO GELVIN ET AL.

The Examiner rejected the claims as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,826,607 to Gelvin et al. The Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner, and submits that the claims, as amended, define over the Gelvin et al. patent. More specifically, the Gelvin et al. '607 patent discloses a system of wireless integrated network sensor nodes that provide access to sensors embedded in vehicles. More specifically, the network allows a user to monitor the sensors embedded in the vehicle to control certain applications.

Low power, wireless technology, e.g., cell phone tower, is used to communicate information from the sensors carried by the vehicles to a node. The nodes, in turn, are positioned in communication with one another to provide a broader range of sensors that may be monitored, thereby providing a broader range of application capabilities that may be controlled.

The Applicant respectfully submits that the Gelvin et al. '607 patent fails to disclose the elements of the claimed

invention, as amended. More specifically, the Gelvin et al. '607 patent fails to disclose an autonomic supply chain management system, or a failure code that is generated on a vehicle and to an off-board predictive diagnostic condition management system to trigger an action.

Instead, the Gelvin et al. '607 patent discloses networking between a plurality of nodes that monitor sensors within vehicles. There is no disclosure of an off-board failure code that triggers an action in the Gelvin et al. '607 patent. Fig. 51, cited by the Examiner, indicates that the sensors in the vehicles are accessible via the Internet. Further, columns 72-76, also cited by the Examiner, provide that the system allows for manufacturers to communicate with vehicles, and for vehicles to communicate with one another. In short, the Gelvin et al. '607 patent is a sensor network for placing a plurality of sensors, located in a plurality of vehicles, in communication with one another.

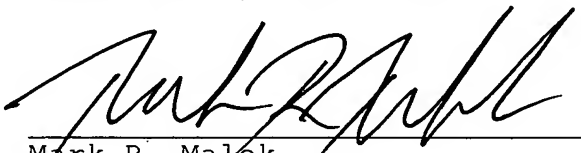
Applicant therefore respectfully submits that the combination proposed by the Examiner fails to disclose the present invention. More specifically, any combination of the Gelvin et al. '607 patent with an off-board failure code still fails to disclose transmitting a failure code to an off-board predictive diagnostic condition management system to thereby autonomically trigger a requisition cycle.

CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments to the claims, and arguments provided herein, it is submitted that all the claims, namely

Claims 38-51, are patentable. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance is requested in due course. Should any minor informalities need to be addressed, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing Amendment is being deposited via U.S. Mail to Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 this 14th day of July, 2006.

Pamela A. Pagel